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Friendship



SPRING 1978

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE RELIGIONS



BISHOP'S ADDRESS TO ANNUAL CONVOCAATION

(Jan. 26 1978, at St. Mark's Church, Pingtung)

Clerical and lay delegates to Convocation:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

My reports to you at Convocation for the last four or five years have been very monotonous. Almost every year there have been improvements in financial giving and institutional work, but little or no new developments in church extension, and in numerical and spiritual growth.

This year I am glad to say that besides the expected financial and institutional developments, there is also some ecclesiastical and spiritual growth.

Last October, a new house church called St. Luke was opened at Hualien. Dr. Yu Shen, a lay reader, and candidate for the non-stipendiary priesthood is in charge. It has a small begining with just a few families at Sunday worship. It has a small library for students to study in. Being a medical doctor himself, Dr. Yu will also do some voluntary clinical service.

During this academic year of 1977-8 we have two more students in training for the Christian ministry-Mr. Liao Chin-ling, a graduate of Feng Chia College, at Tainan Theological College; and Miss Wei Fan-ren, assistant to the chaplain at Hsinpu, at Taiwan Theological College.

Deacon David Hsu was priested on June 12 at the Church of the Advent where he is priest-in-charge and Chaplain of the Hsinpu Junior College.

Rev. Wang Hsien-chih completed his doctoral work in October last year and is now an associate professor of theology at Tainan Theological College, our first Chinese teacher there. It is our hope that besides training our Sheng Kung Hui ordinands, he will continue his research and writing on Chinese theology which was the main purpose for our sending him for training at the South-East Asian Theological Colleges' Graduate school.

Rev. Dr. Peyton Craighill, after years of teaching and administration at Tainan Theological College, has become Archdeacon of the Diocese, a position vacant for over seven years, since the Ven. Patric Hutton left us in May, 1971. We will continue to use his theological knowledge and experience in the training of non-stipendiary priests (we have now 3 candidates) and the further training of clergy.

In the training of lay leaders, the Rev. Roy Taylor of St. Michael's Tainan,

was appointed last year as the Director of Lay Training. He has already held several sessions of lectures and seminars in both the North and the South. We hope that through these classes, many of our lay people will become more efficient in their service to the diocese and mission to the non-Christians.

To carry out the programme for the further training of clergy, Rev. Jason Ke was sent to Trinity College, Toronto University, for a year of theological study and parish experience. He returned last June and resumed his work at St. Peter's Chiayi.



Rev. Dr. Paul Denlinger, who has been in charge of the English service at St. John's Cathedral for five years, left us in August for fulltime work at Soochow University and much teaching at Seminaries and tutorial schools.

Mr. F. T. Ley, who has been our half-time ecumenical and public relations officer, and during my absence from Taiwan the lay administrator, has resigned as of Jan. 1, 1978 because of age and fatigue. We are most grateful for his valuable service both in internal administration and in public relations. He is very kind in offering to continue to serve the church in a voluntary capacity.

We were fortunate to gain the services of an experienced English priest from the USPG, the Ven. Archie Briggs, formerly Archdeacon of Sabah, who arrived in Feb. last year to take charge of the English congregation at Good Shepherd church and an honorary Canon of St. John's Cathedral.

After Feb. this year we shall have an Australian clergyman to serve in Taiwan for the first time. He is the Rev. Dr. Graham Sydney Ogden, whose main duty is teaching Old Testament at Taiwan Theological College, but will help with our English worship services and other work.

There has been a substantial increase in the number of confirmations of 1977 over 1976 (from 27 to 56), but no increase in baptisms and church attendance. We continue to lose several families through emigration each year, and to our small diocese of under

2000 members, this is a great loss. Among these emigrants was Dr. Lee Choo Sheng, for many years medical superintendent of St. Paul's Clinic in Kaoshiung and member of the Bishop's Committee of St. Paul's Church, Kaoshiung. I wish to take this opportunity to thank him for his valuable service and to wish him and his family a very happy retirement in the U.S.A.

It is in finance that we have any significant advance to speak of. The mission and parish contributions to the diocese was up by 75%, from \$237,036.00 NT. in 1976 to \$416,538.00 in 1977. Contribution from institutions (Kindergartens, student hostels, clinic, etc.) was up 2%, from \$340,761.00 N.T. in 1976 to \$431,631.00 in 1977.

All our Kindergartens reported expansion and increase of pupils and income. Our clinic and student hostels are more for service than profit.

Last Dec. the high rise on the Cathedral compound, called 信友大廈 (Friends of Believers Building) was completed. The developer paid for all building expenses and gave us 4 storeys of 12 apartment units for the equivalent price of our land. Rents are collected as from Jan. 1st this year.

At Hsinpu Junior College, a 4-storey building called Francis Wei Hall' was completed last Oct. It was built partly with money from the Hua Chung Fund, and so was dedicated to the memory of its former president. Three floors are used for student activities, with the fourth floor as guest rooms. A Hua Chung Library was also opened downtown in the summer of last year. It will specialize in books on Chinese and Asian culture and religion.

The Taiwan Diocesan Press was established in 1976. So far five books have been published: James Pong's Dialogue between Christianity and the non-Christian religions, Sunday Sermons for the whole year, and the Autobiography of a Chinese bishop, Rev. Y.R. Hsia's Chinese History and the Bible stories, and Dean Samuel Chen's brief biography of Bishop Francis Lushington Norris of North China.

Next year, 1979, will be the 25th anniversary of our Diocese. We hope to celebrate it with the opening of another house church, the ordination of two more non-stipendiary priests and one full time priest, the bishop drawing his salary locally from our Episcopal Endowment Fund and thereby reducing the ECUSA block grant by another \$6000 U.S. a year, the completion of the revision of the Chinese Prayer book and perhaps a concert by a well-known young Anglican pianist from England, etc.

May God bless us all with strength and enthusiasm for his mission and service in Taiwan for another year.

+James Pong

IMPRESSIONS OF THIS YEAR'S CONVOCATION-Canon Archie Briggs

Some 50 delegates met at the Annual Convocation, held, this time, in Pingtung. The weather was delightful—a touch of summer—and people shed clothes by the hour.

As in most gatherings, the chief joy was fellowship one with another. Asides are always interesting.



One man:—"I'm so glad to meet you: for a year you have just been a name. Now I know what you look like". (I hope he wasn't disappointed!).

A delegate to an American representative:—"You must find it pretty boring as it's all in Chinese".

Reply:—"If you came to Texas, you wouldn't understand it either so I'm happy to be here on the receiving end as we are one in the Church. Actually (he went on to add) I think you are more democratic than we are at home—more speeches from the floor. There everything is so big-cut and dried".

A young boy helping to serve tea:—"What is the second language in America?" I had to take advice. "Spanish" said my informant—but another voice joined in—"It all depends where you are". One is never too old to learn.

Two well-known figures were missing. (a) Mr F.T. Ley, who has not been well for some time, and has resigned as public relations' officer. We shall miss his courtesy and helpfulness.

and (b) Mr Herbert Ma, the Chancellor, due to the recent death of his father.

The Reverend and Mrs David Woodworth, visitors from Ireland, seemed to regard all (people and events) with appreciative eye, and were specially happy to witness and record with clicking camera a Chinese wedding (brass band and the lot) which was taking place across the street.

St. Mark's is obviously a Church well cared for with vestments and linens beautifully kept.

Out thanks to Father and Mrs Charles Chen for arrangements made and hospitality received.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE RELIGIONS IN TAIWAN

Ven. Peyton Craighill

Visitors to Taiwan are impressed by the extent and variety of religious activities here. Temples and shrines surround them on every side. In most homes and many shops, devotional centers can be seen, furnished with images, lights, incense, and offerings. One doesn't have to stay long or travel far to run into religious festivals in full swing, frequently on a massive scale. With the growth of economic prosperity, these manifestations of traditional religion are more evident than ever. New temples of vast proportions are being built and old ones refurbished. Religious celebrations outdo each other in their lavishness.

It is in this setting that Christ's mission is at work. What are these traditional religions? What part do they play in people's lives? In the next few issues of Friendship, in the limited space available, I will say something about these matters.

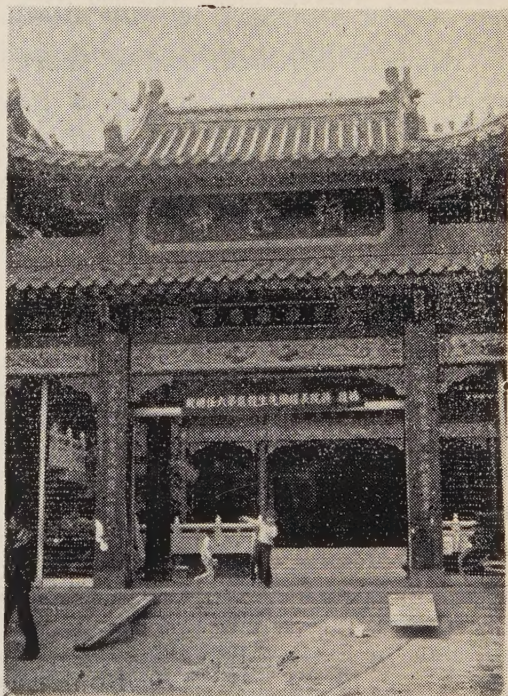
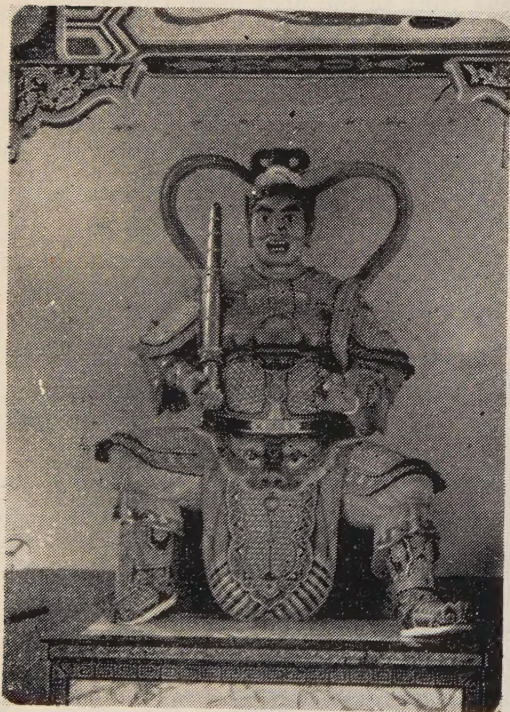
The conventional thing to say is that China has three traditional religions—Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Superficially, this statement is true. But without elaboration, it can obscure the fact that these three surface expressions overlie a vastly complex web of interacting forces at work. Until one has some grasp of these more fundamental dynamics, it is not possible to understand how these traditions interrelate in their influence upon people's lives in Taiwan today.

In attempting to sort out this complicated tangle of relationships, it is best to consider them in historical perspective. Chinese religion, like that of other cultures, began with a primitive, pre-historic cultus consisting, as best can now be told, of a worship of the forces of nature expressed in natural phenomena and animal life. Beginning probably over 4,000 years ago in the courts of the nobility, there developed out of this a far more sophisticated religious outlook combining a profound metaphysic of the relationship of people to the cosmos with its expression in highly-developed ritual practices. This is the religion of the ancient pre-confucian classics. This sophisticated court cultus and the simple religion of the people continued on parallel lines, indicative of the stratification of society.

Then about 2500 years ago, a new development took place. About the time of Confucius, a number of speculative thinkers appeared upon the scene, bringing to bear on Chinese culture an influence similar to that of the Greek philosophers on the West. The movement during this period was roughly in two directions. Thinkers like Confucius provided a humanizing and secularizing influence on the traditional religious awareness. Their contribution was the development within the framework of ancient religion of a social philosophy and ethic. Their appeal was to social activists, especially in government and education.

The other movement, associated with thinkers like Lao Tzu, was in the direction of mystical speculation. In them, the ancient Chinese cosmic awareness found a new depth and subtlety. This appeal to the human quest for meaning in and identity with the realm of the transcendent provided a counterbalance to the social activism of the philosophical humanists.

Thus 2,000 years ago, we find developed the four strands in the Chinese religious outlook that have interwoven and continued down to the present, namely, ancient court ritual, mystical naturalism, social ceremonial, and folk cultus. In later articles, I will say more about how these have developed in later centuries, in particular in the three traditions mentioned earlier, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism.



INTRODUCING ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, CHIADING

It was a Sunday afternoon in January. We clergy stood in a group and looked at the bare site where the church had once been. Beside it was the hall which, after conversion, would become the new church building. St. Andrew's, Chiading is, and always has been a place of changes.

Chiading is a fishing village not far from Tainan. It was in 1956 that Rev. Richard Yoh, then the minister of Grace Church, casting his eyes on the surrounding area, decided on Chiading as a place where a new Christian mission should be established. With the help of a Mr. Chu, a layman from Grace Church, he began house meetings there on January 4th 1959. From the first it was the Mainland refugees—of which there were many—which were the main target for the ministry. Thus the language used was Mandarin, whereas those who had lived for a long time in the area used Taiwanese.

Numbers increased, and in March a site was purchased on which two buildings stood—one that would serve as a church, and one which would be suitable for the minister's residence and offices. This new church was consecrated on 14th June and given the name, "St. Andrew's". At that time there were 20 regular worshippers, and children and young people also numbered 20. In addition to Sunday services there were other activities such as Sunday School work, choir practices, a weekly prayer meeting, relief and medical work.

A clinic was officially established in 1960 and in November of that year St. Andrew's became officially recognised as a mission station, with its own Bishop's Committee. Richard Yoh became Vicar. In September 1961 Rev. Herbert Yen took over; but, the original "residence" being occupied by the clinic facilities, he lived in Tainan, and spent only the daytime in Chiading. Numbers grew, until the number of worshippers exceeded 100; this included over 60 baptized and 47 confirmed.

In August 1962 the church building underwent extensive alterations to make it more suitable for Episcopalian worship. It was proposed too to put up a separate building for use as the clinic. The ground breaking ceremony took place in May 1963. An arrangement was made with the neighbouring school concerning access rights. Money was donated by the American Church to buy two boats, so as to help refugee families. Accordingly, on 30th November there was a special ceremony, with Bishop Gilson in attendance, to mark the opening of the clinic and the naming of the boats.

In September 1964 Herbert Yen moved to Pingtung, and for a short while a seminary student, Mr. Cheng-hai Yang, was responsible. Difficulties arose which forced the clinic to close in September 1965. Rev. Chun-shih Ou, then a deacon, took over in October; but while he was in Japan for further training Rev. Peyton Craighill was responsible

for the services. In June 1967 Rev. John Chien became the Vicar; in his time he used the empty clinic accomodation as a student hostel. The boat project came to an unfortunate end: the fishermen changed their jobs and the boats reverted to their original owners. In 1969 Rev. Andrew Huang became Vicar. The clinic was revived in 1972, but it had to close in May of the following year. When Andrew Huang moved to Kaohsiung in 1974 he was replaced by David Lai, then a seminary student, but soon afterwards ordained.

By this time numbers had become very low, largely because of removals. Sometimes there was talk of closing St. Andrew's altogether. It was not an easy situation for a newly ordained man to face. However, the building of a big new fishing harbour not far away gave promise of considerable growth in the area; and it was felt that to retain our presence in that area was a wise thing to do. Combined Mandarin and Taiwanese worship has just begun, as an attempt to communicate with the Taiwanese people, who are in a vast majority there. In the autumn, Kindergarten work is to begin.

In an area where traditional beliefs are rigidly adhered to, and where temples and shrines seem to be almost as numerous as houses, the preaching of the Christian Gospel is a formidable task. We need to support Rev. David Lai and his wife as they labour in these circumstances.



Rev. David Lai in the temporary church

1st January. Just after we got back from supper, C. told me that J. was asking for me. He was in a bad state of depression concerning his work, and he felt that to become a Christian was his only hope. I prayed with him along these lines, and Eileen 'phoned the Friday group to ask them for their prayers. Later, as I was praying for him, I thought of 1 Peter 5:7. God would bear J.'s burdens. He would also bear my burden of seeking to help J. I prayed, and asked some of the Christians to pray, that God would do an obvious work in J.'s life, and thus bring glory to his own name.

3rd January. J. went to the meeting at Wu Laushr's with S. and seemed much encouraged by it. Afterwards he was happily reading the Bible. There really does seem to be a big change in him.

8th January. I drove with Peyton and Wang Hsien-chih to Chiading this afternoon for a clergy meeting. The old church had been pulled down and the little hall was to be converted into a church building. We discussed some nominations for committee members and talked about the future of Chiading, which looked brighter than before because of the construction of a new fishing port. As it was the last time Peyton would be meeting with us before moving to Taipei, there was a special meal for Mary and himself at the "Blue Skies".

22nd January. An addition to our Sunday congregation was a couple called Nishi, of Japanese extraction, but now living in the States, who were visiting various theological colleges. I spoke again on Ephesians 2:4-10. Christopher moved the pulpit just before I was due to preach, and I had to put it back in place.

23rd January. We had the last "Literature and Christianity" seminar this evening. The authors in the first half were Thomas Moore, Thomas Carlyle and Oscar Wilde. Those in the second half were Philip Larkin, Doris Lessing and Colin Duriez. Again I felt that the Lord gave me freedom. All but one took a copy home of the "Living New Testament" in Chinese; the other girl had a copy already. I feel that these three evenings have really been worthwhile.

10th February. There was one sad piece of news today. C. told me that he had failed his exams and must leave the university. He therefore packed his luggage and left. Soon he must expect to be called up for military service.

19th February. (Lay training in Kaohsiung) Instead of the expected 45, we had only about 30. As I spoke on the Biblical background of ministry I had plenty of freedom. After a break, representatives of each church spoke of the ministry they were performing. Some were honest enough to admit that they were not performing much.

Peyton then did some summarizing, adding some points of his own, and some of those present contributed their own remarks. The meal was again a very professional production. Who would want to move the location away from Kaohsiung? Group discussion followed. Last of all there was a service taken by Wang Hsien-chih's brother, at which David Lai preached. It included the writing by each person of a resolve concerning his or her own ministry, and these were afterwards taken up as an offering.

20th February. The service in the seminary chapel at 4.30 was attended by people from many countries. Wang Hsien-chih was the first person to receive a doctorate under the new programme for South East Asia. It was a long service, with various prayers and speeches, besides hymns and a rendering of „Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring". Communion was also a part of the service. The whole thing took about 1½ hours.

27th February. In the early evening Je. came to see me about English classes. We talked too about poor C. But what was most important was that he believed in the value of prayer, and wanted to understand more about coming to a faith of his own.

Same day. The prayer meeting was encouraging. Six came; and they recognized a real need to support each other, especially in view of our failure to help C.

Prayer for the Mission of the Church in Asia

by Rt. Rev. James Pong

(This prayer was said at the consecration of the Cathedral of Christ the King at Kalamazoo, Diocese of Western Michigan.)

“O God of love, whose will it is that all people be saved; we pray for the nations and peoples of the huge continent of Asia where over one third of the world's population live and only 3% of them are Christians. We pray for those who live in the Communist countries of Red China, North Korea, Vietnam etc. who are suffering for their faith. We pray for the hungry and needy in many Asian countries.

Supply, O Lord, the needs of the poor and hungry. Grant strength, endurance, and hope to those who suffer. Raise up more people in our church to pray and to work, to give to you and go out for you, that your Church may grow and your kingdom be extended among the people of Asia. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

AROUND THE CHURCHES

St. John's Cathedral, Taipei

Mr. Ma Shou-hua, the famous artist, died recently. The funeral service took place on 12th January, and a special memorial service was held at the Cathedral on the 30th. His son, Professor Herbert Ma, is a prominent layman in our diocese.

On the morning of February 7th a thanksgiving service was held to mark the Chinese New Year. Many other churches did the same.

The new multi-storey building is now completed and in use. Four floors belong to our church.

A further session of lay training took place here on 26th February, but attendance was disappointing.

Northern youth groups are to combine on the evening of Easter Sunday for a music and drama presentation. It is hoped that this will have evangelistic impact.

Good Shepherd, Taipei

Under the direction of Canon Archie Briggs a series of lively discussion groups took place on Sunday evenings during Lent.

Holy Trinity, Keelung

During the time of building, worship takes place in temporary rented accommodation not far away.

St. Peter's Chiayi

At the invitation of Rev. Jason Ke a group of young people travelled down from the north and held special meetings in this church from 17th to 19th February.

St. Michael's House, Tainan

The most encouraging feature this term is the revival of prayer concern among the Christians. This comes as a direct answer to prayer.

St. Andrew's, Chiading

Worship now takes place in Mandarin and Taiwanese together. This is an attempt to meet the needs of local people. Preparations are now underway for the opening of a Kindergarten in the autumn.

St. Paul's, Kaohsiung

The new vicarage is almost ready. Another lay training session was held here on 19th February.

St. Mark's, Pingtung

The young people of the church did a great job in providing for the needs of those who attended the Convocation. The Bishop remained in Pingtung on the Sunday following in order to confirm six church members.

St. Luke's, Hualien

36 people attended a meeting here on 11th January, when Father Wang of the Roman Catholic Church gave a slide presentation on "Jerusalem".

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

The Rt. Rev. Harold C. Gossnell,

the retired Bishop of Texas, visited the diocese from 15th to 17th February. While he was with us he explained the outworking of the new Venture in Mission scheme.

Rev. David Woodworth,

Vicar of Bandon (Eire) and his wife Mary spent a few weeks in the diocese on a fact finding tour on behalf of the Dublin University Far East Mission. This mission used to support work in Fukien, but now has a broader concern for work in East Asia. They stayed in Pingtung, Tainan, Taichung and Taipei, in addition to visiting Hsinpu, Hualien and other places. They had good reason to be impressed by local hospitality. We hope it will be possible to read of their impressions in the next issue.



Mr. F. T. Ley,

a faithful servant of the diocese, felt compelled to retire from his official post in our church because of advice from his doctors. This took effect from 31st December. It is going to be difficult for such an active man to learn how to rest!

Rev. Wang Hsien-chih

is the first man to receive his doctorate under the new scheme for training men on the spot in South East Asia. At the ceremony in Tainan Theological College chapel which took place on 20th February, there were visitors from many countries. Dr. Wang is now our Episcopalian representative on the staff of the seminary.

Archdeacon Peyton Craighill

and his family are now installed in Friendship House in Taipei. Despite the mountains of unpacked boxes of books, thinly disguised with cloths, the place is beginning to look like home. It is a big change for anyone to make, and the family certainly needs our prayers.

Bishop James Pong

will take an active part at the Lambeth Conference, to be held from July 23 to August 13. 440 bishops from throughout the Anglican world will attend. Our Bishop has been asked to read the Epistle at the Opening Service at Canterbury Cathedral, chair a working group on the Living Faiths and Religions and celebrate one Holy Communion service in the Chinese language, the first time it will have been done in Lambeth.

**Bishop Gilbert Baker's Foreword to Bishop Pong's new book,
"Sunday Sermons for the whole Year" now available in English.**

One of the greatest spiritual discoveries of the Christian Church has been the rhythm of corporate prayer through all the seasons of the year. Though the words and forms of liturgy vary from place to place and time to time, the unbroken breath of prayer and praise, penitence and thanksgiving, coupled with the sacraments of bread and wine and water have been an incalculable source of strength to Christian people all over the world. These sermons by my friend Bishop James Pong bear witness to the Anglican heritage and concern for steady worship and the expounding of the Gospel throughout the Christian year.

It is a considerable feat for any preacher to produce adequate sermons for 52 Sundays and other holy days in the calendar. But these addresses given at various times over a number of years, maintain a freshness and originality throughout. They are interesting, full of vivid illustrations often derived from the author's travels in many lands, — and they have their touch of the Spirit, stirring our imaginations to devotion and action.

The pattern of the Church's year expressed in the Prayer Book of 1662 can hardly be said to have restricted the preacher in his choice of subjects. There are sermons here on "God and the Astronauts," "The Ideal Ruler," "Music and Worship," "The Doctrine of Creation," "Food," and "Religionless Christianity."

I believe that many people reading Bishop Pong's sermons will be strengthened in their faith and resolve to play their part in the rhythm of the Church's worship and action; they will discover that the motivating force is none other than the Holy Spirit of God.

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